

to be realized ; in its narrower sense it is the hierarchy divinely commissioned for its interpretation ; in both it embraces the whole of life, and its authority is final. Though practice is perpetually at variance with theory, there is no absolute division between the inner and personal life, which is " the sphere of religion/" and the practical interests, the external order, the impersonal mechanism, to which, if some modern teachers may be trusted, religion is irrelevant.

There is no absolute division, but there is a division of quality. There are—to use a modern phrase—degrees of reality. The distinctive feature of mediaeval thought is that contrasts which later were to be presented as irreconcilable antitheses appear in it as differences within a larger unity, and that the world of social organization, originating in physical necessities, passes by insensible gradations into that of the spirit. Man shares with other animals the necessity of maintaining and perpetuating his species ; in addition, as a natural creature, he has what is peculiar to himself, an inclination to the life of the intellect and of society—ⁿ to know the truth about God and to live in communities*^u These activities, which form his life according to the law of nature, may be regarded, and sometimes are regarded, as indifferent or hostile to the life of the spirit. But the characteristic thought is

different. It is that of a synthesis.

The contrast between nature and grace, between human appetites and interests and religion, is not absolute, but relative. It is a contrast of matter and the spirit informing it, of stages in a process, of preparation and fruition, Grace works on the unperfected nature of man, not to destroy it, but to transform it. And what is true of the individual is true of society. An attempt is made to give it a true significance by relating it to the purpose of human life as known by revelation. In the words of a famous (or notorious) Bull: "The way of religion is to lead the things which